



PAMBANSANG KOMISYON PARA SA KULTURA AT MGA SINING

18 November 2021

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

CASE NO: **NCCA – 11 – 2022 – 01**

**SUBJECT: PETITION TO DELIST THE LE PARC APARTMENTS
LANDSCAPING LOCATED AT MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI
CITY AS AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL PROPERTY**

In compliance with the publication requirement and pursuant to Section 8 of Republic Act 10066 and Section 11 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations, this notice is hereby served to the public that CTM Management Corporation has filed with this office a petition to delist the presumption as an Important Cultural Property (ICP) of the Le Parc Apartments landscaping on the following grounds:

1. The Le Parc landscape is not a representative or exemplary work of National Artist I.P Santos;
2. The current state of the Le Parc landscape significantly differs from the original landscape design of National Artist I.P Santos.

Under Section 3 of R.A. 10066, an **Important Cultural Property** is defined as a cultural property having exceptional cultural, artistic, and historical significance to the Philippines, as shall be determined by the National Museum of the Philippines (NMP) and/or National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP). Additionally, Section 5 of the same states that the works by a Manlilikha ng Bayan and works by a National Artist shall be considered important cultural property, unless declared otherwise by this Commission.

Section 11 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. No. 10066 further provides that:

“A declaration or a lifting of cultural property as National Cultural Treasure or Important Cultural Property shall commence upon the filing of a verified petition by the **owner, stakeholder or any interested person** [emphasis added] with the Commission, which shall issue temporary remedies, if necessary to protect a site prior to declaration, after which it shall refer the matter to the appropriate cultural agency.”



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In view of the foregoing, the appropriate cultural agency having jurisdiction in determining whether or not the subject property bears significance is this Commission. Any person adversely affected by said petition may file their written support or opposition with this Office or through heritagelaw@ncca.gov.ph not later than **December 18, 2021.**





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Recreation space at the rear of the Le Parc Apartments building showing the landscaping designed by NA I.P. Santos



Location Map

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PAMBANSANG KOMISYON PARA SA KULTURA AT MGA SINING

November 10, 2021

Report on the Conducted Ocular Inspection of the Landscaping of the Le Parc Apartments in Makati Avenue, Makati City

Introduction

Last 04 October 2021, CTM Management Corporation filed a petition to remove the presumption of the Le Parc Apartments building's landscaping, a work of National Artist Idelfonso Santos, Jr., in Makati Avenue, Makati City as an Important Cultural Property.

Their petition grounds are (1) the Le Parc Apartments landscaping is not a representative or exemplary work of NA IP Santos as this does not carry the elements and characteristics of his design and (2) the current state of the Le Parc Apartments landscaping differs from the original landscape design of NA IP Santos.

Last 10 November 2021, personnel of this Commission namely Ar. Alnie Hayudini, Ms. Jeanne Maling, and Ms. Maureen Doma conducted an inspection, limited to visual and photographic documentation, of the subject property with the assistance of the owner's representative, Ar. Barnaby Kaw.

Background of the National Artist

Ildefonso Paez Santos Jr., also known as Ildefonso P. Santos or IP Santos, was a Filipino architect who was known for being the "Father of Philippine Landscape Architecture." He was conferred the Order of National Artist in 2006 for Architecture for pioneering the landscape architecture practice in the Philippines. His exemplary contribution in the field of landscape architecture included the designs of hundreds of parks, plazas, gardens that have enriched the modern Filipino experience with landscaped outdoor settings.¹ For this, he became known as the "Father of Philippine Landscape Architecture".¹

NA IP Santos's works may be characterized by four distinguishing characteristics: (1) integration of art and/or water features in landscape architecture; (2) use of indigenous materials in construction and/or in flora; (3) mass planting; (4) serial vision.

In some of his projects, he incorporated a variety of sculptures, relief murals, and mosaics in figurative and in abstract styles.² Oftentimes, sculptures were positioned on fountains, whose play of water, as well as underwater lights, well-complemented works of art. The integration of art and water features in landscape architecture was very much obvious in the (now demolished) Makati Commercial Center.³ The Loyola Memorial Park in Paranaque and Marikina featured sculptures as well.⁴ In Paco Park, IP Santos placed a circular fountain that served as the focal point of the park.⁵

NA IP Santos was partial to using native plants.⁶ The rich natural resources of the Philippines gave him the motivation to fully utilize it. Formerly ignored plants such as bandera española, periwinkle and yellow bell are now widely utilized in landscaping as popularized by Ildefonso P. Santos.⁷

¹ "Order of National Artists: Ildefonso P. Santos, Jr." NCCA. April 10, 2019.

<https://ncca.gov.ph/about-culture-and-arts/culture-profile/national-artists-of-the-philippines/ildefonso-p-santos-jr/>

² Jeannie E. Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Ildefonso P. Santos* (Pasig City, Philippines: I.P. Santos + Associates, 2004), 80.

³ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Ildefonso P. Santos*, 21.

⁴ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Ildefonso P. Santos*, 28.

⁵ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Ildefonso P. Santos*, 25.

⁶ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Ildefonso P. Santos*, 84.

⁷ Maiti, who, "IP Santos: A legend in his own right", *BluPrint*.



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Mass planting was also popularized by IP Santos during the late 1960s and early 1970s, which he describes as "hodge-podge arrangements that gave effect". Mass planting is done to achieve a visual harmony of plants in terms of their color, texture, size, etc. IP Santos also developed this technique by creating small groups of plants that serve as ornamentation or to accent the plants in its backdrop.⁸

Finally, IP Santos often uses a visual approach called serial vision. The usage of serial vision complements the organic line that IP Santos often uses, as the movement of the line is often what leads the viewer forward to the focal point. The use of changing heights and elevations likewise helps add to the variety of visual movement. A new element is always introduced in each corner of his work in the form of a fountain, a sculpture, a tree or a mass of colorful plants. Dramatic lighting is also added to enhance the visual experience at night.⁹

Context and Current Conditions of the Property

The Le Parc Apartments building is part of the "Apartment Ridge", a residential community masterplan by Ayala Corporation in the 1960s along the portion of Ayala Avenue from Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue to the corner of Makati Avenue.

The owner of the building commissioned Architect William V. Coscolluela to design the residential apartment, who engaged NA IP Santos to design the landscape areas of the building on the ground floor. It was completed in 1984.

The landscaping is limited only to the recreation space of the residential apartment on the rear side of the ground floor. The recreation space accommodates a lap pool with a sunbathing lounge amenity and an open area enclosed by softscapes on the sides. The design of the landscaping does not provide an innovative solution in defining the configuration and function of the space, as there is no definite zoning of active and passive areas. Further, a good design has a focal point which is lacking in the landscaping design. It is apparent that the softscapes have been changed over time, due to the introduction of different flora species. The form of the plantings that are created through massing and composition is shambolic. The proportion of the existing plants, based on the size, texture, color, leaf shape, etc., are unharmonious and unbalanced in organization. The hardscape does not typify the creative representation of the National Artist, only the principle of line in design that can be seen on the oblique direction of the tile pattern of the flooring is appreciated. Other vegetation on the front and sides of the building are inconsequential and some are even planted in pots.

⁸ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Idefonso P. Santos*, 83.

⁹ Javelosa, *The Landscape Architecture of Idefonso P. Santos*, 79.





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Noted by:

Nov. 16, 2021

Joseph Patrick Lee

Chief Administrative Officer, CPPRD



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- Building front façade side showing its landscaping:



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- Building right-side showing the driveway ramps:



- Recreation space at the rear of the building showing the landscaping that is designed by NA IP Santos:



- Recreation space's sunbathing lounge and open area and its softscapes:



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- Lap pool area and its softscapes:



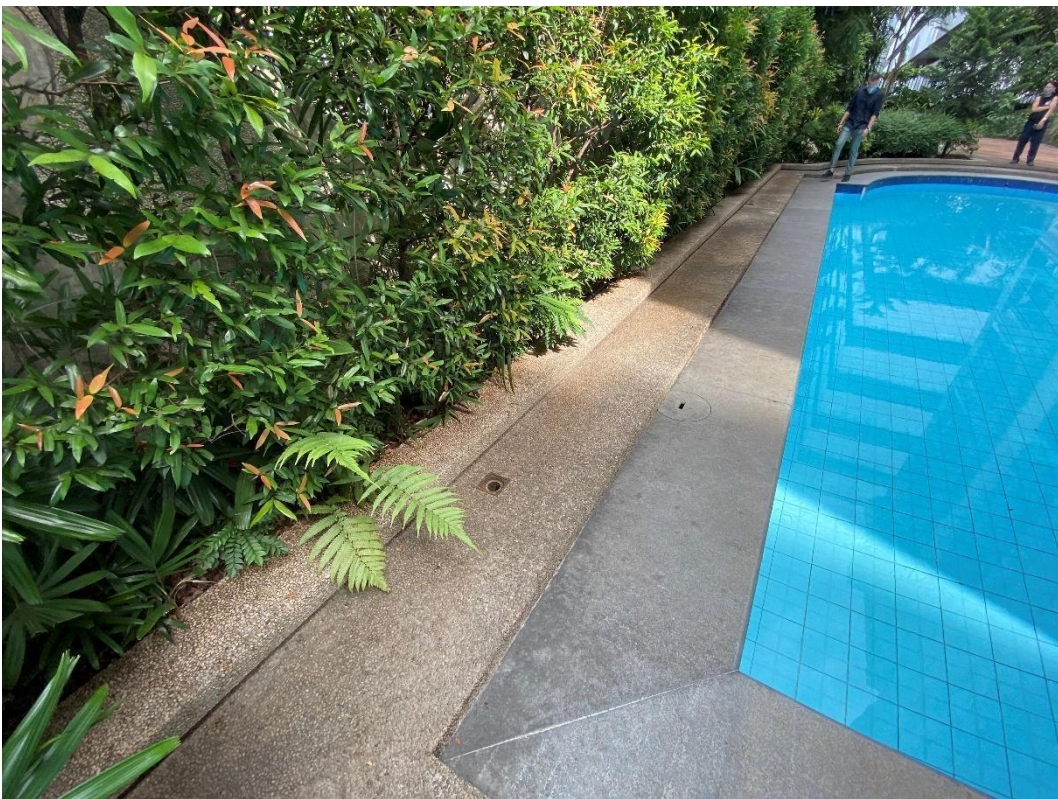
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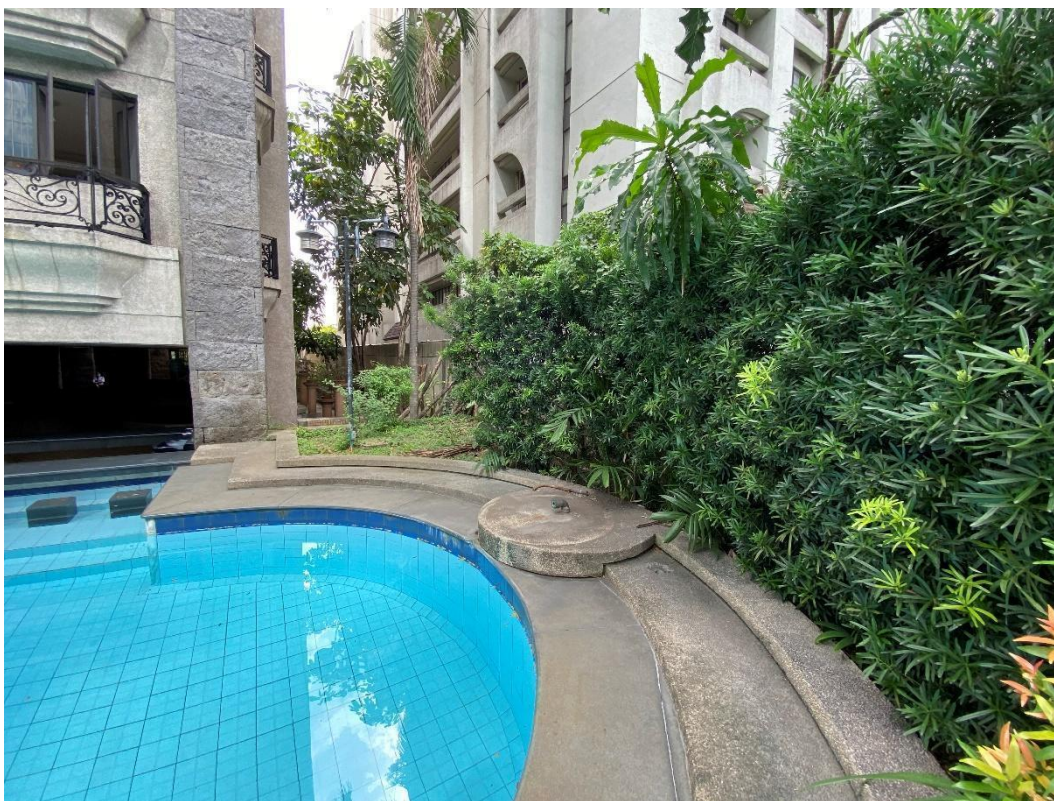
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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS
MANILA

IN RE: REMOVAL OF THE
PRESUMPTION THAT "LE PARC"
LANDSCAPE IS IMPORTANT
CULTURAL PROPERTY

Case No. _____

CTM MANAGEMENT
CORPORATION

Petitioner.

X-----X

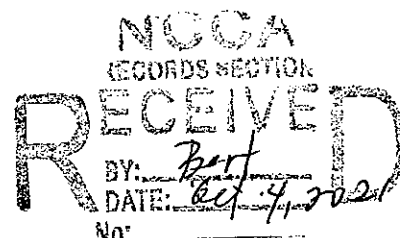
VERIFIED PETITION

Petitioner **CTM MANAGEMENT CORPORATION**
("Petitioner"), by counsel, respectfully states:

1. Petitioner is a corporation organized under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines, wholly owned by Filipino citizens, and having its principal offices at No. 2260 Pasong Tamo Extension, Bgy. Magallanes, Makati City.

2. Petitioner is the registered owner of a parcel of land along Makati Avenue, Urdaneta Village, Makati City covered by Transfer Certificate of Title No. S-74246 issued by the Registry of Deeds for Makati City (formerly the Registry of Deeds for Metro Manila District IV), as well as the residential condominium building known as the "Le Parc Apartments" located on such parcel of land.

3. Attached hereto as **Annex "1"** is a copy of Transfer Certificate of Title No. S-74246 issued in the name of Petitioner as proof of its ownership over the said parcel of land. Then, attached hereto as **Annexes "2" to "2-W"** are copies of the Condominium Certificates of Title issued in the name of Petitioner as proof of its ownership over all the units in "Le Parc Apartments".



4. In the early 1980s, Petitioner commissioned Filipino architect William V. Coscolluela to design a residential apartment building that will be part of the “Apartment Ridge”, the residential community master-planned by the Ayala Corporation in the 1960’s along the portion of Ayala Avenue running from EDSA to the corner of Makati Avenue.¹

5. In turn, with Petitioner’s knowledge and consent, Architect Coscolluela commissioned Architect Idelfonso P. Santos, also known as “I.P. Santos”, to design the landscape areas of “Le Parc Apartments” at the ground floor. Architects Coscolluela and I.P. Santos had worked together on similar residential projects in Makati City at that time. Their shared projects included the Ayala Twin Towers along Ayala Avenue and several residential houses in Dasmariñas Village, Makati City.

6. Petitioner completed the construction of “Le Parc Apartments” in 1984 based on the design of Architects Coscolluela and I.P. Santos.

7. Meanwhile, in 2006, upon the recommendation of the Honorable Commission and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the President of the Philippines conferred on I.P. Santos the Order of the National Artists Award, in recognition of his exemplary achievement in and contributions to Philippine architecture and allied arts.

8. In 2009, Republic Act No. 10066 or the National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009 took effect. The said law defined an important cultural property as “a cultural property having exceptional cultural, artistic and historical significance to the Philippines”.² It also provided that for purposes of protecting a cultural property against exportation, modification or demolition, all works by a deceased national artist shall be considered important cultural property, unless declared otherwise by the Honorable Commission.³

9. National Artist I.P. Santos died in 2014.⁴

¹ Alcazaren, P., The rise and rise of high-rise living, Philippine Star, 5 April 2008, accessible at <https://www.philstar.com/lifestyle/modern-living/2008/04/05/54115/rise-and-rise-high-rise-living>

² Section 3(w) of Republic Act No. 10066 or National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009.

³ Section 5 of Republic Act No. 10066 or National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009; Section 8 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10066.

⁴ National Artist Idelfonso Santos dies at 84, ABS-CBN News, 30 January 2014, accessible at <https://news.abs-cbn.com/lifestyle/01/30/14/national-artist-ildefonso-santos-dies-84>

10. Consequently, in the Philippine Registry of Cultural Property or “Talapamana” which is administered by the Honorable Commission pursuant to Republic Act No. 10066, “Le Parc Building” is listed as presumed to be an important cultural property on the ground that it is a work of a deceased National Artist.⁵

11. Section 5 of Republic Act No. 10066 provides that “the property owner may petition the appropriate cultural agency to remove the presumption of important cultural property which shall not be unreasonably withheld”, the appropriate cultural agency being the Honorable Commission.

12. Therefore, being its owner, Petitioner is hereby seeking that the Honorable Commission lift the presumptive status conferred on “Le Parc Building” as an important cultural property under Republic Act No. 10066 on the ground that its landscape was designed by National Artist I.P. Santos, so that Petitioner may be able to demolish and / or modify the same, as the case may be.

ARGUMENTS

The landscape of “Le Parc Apartments” should not be regarded as an important cultural property because it does not pose an exceptional cultural, artistic and historical significance to the Philippines.

- I. The Le Parc landscape is not a representative or exemplary work of National Artist I.P. Santos.
- II. The current state of the Le Parc landscape significantly differs from the original landscape design of National Artist I.P. Santos.

DISCUSSION

I. The Le Parc landscape is not a representative or exemplary work of National Artist I.P. Santos.

⁵List as of 5 July 2021, accessible at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GXOX0fhLa8Zm_FR2wFDZXDKN2YoKeZxW/edit#gid=586369855

13. The landscape of Le Parc did not carry the elements of a representative or exemplary work of National Artist I.P. Santos.

14. Throughout his work, the designs of National Artist I.P. Santos were known for the following characteristics:

- a) The use of prominent and bespoke-designed water features;
- b) The incorporation of works of local contemporary artists;
- c) The use of softscape planting materials for fencing and as buffers;
- d) The innovative driveway alignments and parking layouts;
- e) The use of large landscaping areas to provide both active and passive zones in the development; and
- f) The use of mass plantings to create a visual feast of colors and textures.

15. These characteristics were detailed by Architect Paulo G. Alcazaren, a known landscape architect and a reputed journalist and historian of architecture, in the third-party expert opinion that he gave upon Petitioner's request. The expert opinion is attached hereto as **Annex "3"**.

16. Architect Alcazaren concluded that the foregoing characteristics marked a representative or exemplary work of National Artist I.P. Santos. This is based on Architect Alcazaren's firsthand experience of working with the latter and his study of the latter's works through the years. In particular, he analyzed the other works of National Artist I.P. Santos, such as the Philippine Plaza Hotel in Manila, the Magallanes Church in Makati, the San Miguel Headquarters in Pasig, and the Alexandra Condominium in Pasig.

17. Architect Alcazaren then compared the foregoing representative works of National Artist I.P. Santos to the landscape of "Le Parc". Based on his analysis, the key design elements of representative works of I.P. Santos are absent in the landscape of "Le Parc".

"16. The "Le Parc" landscape does not have any prominent water features similar to the lagoon pool found in the Philippine Plaza Hotel or the cooling ponds found in the San Miguel Headquarters. The "Le Parc

Apartments” only has an unremarkable and utilitarian lap pool. The limited space on the lot gave no room for any unique design that is representative of I.P. Santos’ important works.

17. The Le Parc Condominium does not incorporate the works of local contemporary artists similar to the landscape design of the Magallanes Church. The Le Parc Condominium landscape does have two sculptures beside the swimming pool. These sculptures appear to have been added after the original design was finalized, since their locations are awkward and proper settings were not provided as in the Magallanes and other of Santos’ important works. Further, the pieces are not by known collaborators of I.P. Santos like Eduardo Castrillo or Arturo Luz.

18. The Le Parc Condominium does not use softscape planting materials for fencing, similar to the original perimeter fence of the San Miguel Headquarters. The perimeter wall is basically hollow block fence clad with pebble stone washout all throughout. A common material used by different architects and an extension of the architectural design of W V Coscolluella and Associates. Furthermore, there are no patterns or accents of landscape foliage as how IP Santos is known for.

19. The Le Parc Condominium does not have an innovative parking layout, similar to the “tropical” parking layout of the San Miguel Headquarters. Said parking is basically a one-way ingress/egress area with no cross ventilation as it is only a one-level basement parking, the floor finish of which is just a straightforward epoxy paint that gets dilapidated through time due to heavy traffic. Again, there was no input here by I.P. Santos as the parking for Le Parc Condominium was a wholly architectural responsibility.

20. The Le Parc Condominium does not devote a significant amount of space to landscaping areas, unlike the Alexandra Condominium development. In the Le Parc Condominium, the total area of the landscaping is relatively minor as it is merely foundation planting to frame the building. Further, most of the landscape areas are relatively narrow and limited to concrete planting

boxes. Due to the limited area for the landscape, the design did not and could not include any mass planting or distinctive combinations of planting using the likes of octopus trees, raphis palms, pitogo or oliva palms and others, which are considered a trademark feature of I.P. Santos.”⁶

18. Based on the foregoing, the landscape of “Le Parc” is neither a representative work nor an exceptional work of National Artist I.P. Santos. Neither is it one of his key works. As such, it should not be regarded as having exceptional architectural significance in the Philippines that would qualify it as an important cultural property of the Philippines.

II. The current state of the Le Parc landscape significantly differs from the original landscape design of National Artist I.P. Santos.

19. Assuming without conceding that the “Le Parc” landscape carried the key design elements of a representative, exemplary, or iconic work of National Artist I.P. Santos, the current condition of the “Le Parc” landscape shows that these design elements, if any, have nonetheless already irreversibly disappeared.

20. To this end, Architect Alcazaren had carefully evaluated the as-built plans for the “Le Parc” landscape and compared them to the current condition of the “Le Parc” landscape during an ocular inspection in July of 2021. A copy of the as-built plans of the “Le Parc” landscape are attached hereto as **Annex “4”**.

21. Architect Alcazaren found that the current state of the Le Parc landscape significantly differs from the original landscape design of National Artist I.P. Santos.

“22. The designed and originally built hardscape exists relatively intact today, mostly in the Binangonan pavers used; but this material was used in many landscaping projects of that time, and not just those designed by I.P. Santos. I do not therefore consider the use of Binangonan pavers as a key element of an I.P. Santos design. I and

⁶ Annex “3”, Expert Opinion of Architect Paulo G. Alcazaren.

other landscape architects and architects in that period used the stone.

23. Only 15% of the designed and originally planted softscape exists today. Many of the original plantings have died, have been replaced by other plants, have been replaced by stone, or are overgrown. Planting beds now host papaya plants, which were never used by I.P. Santos in his planting designs. The only expansive planting area is now devoid of any plants.

24. Therefore, the current state of the Le Parc Condominium significantly differs from the original landscape design.”⁷

22. If the current condition of the “Le Parc” landscape is irreversibly different from the original design of National Artist I.P. Santos around three decades ago, then it cannot be said that the “Le Parc” landscape carries any exceptional cultural, artistic and historical significance to the Philippines.

23. Consequently, the “Le Parc” landscape should not be deemed to be an important cultural property. Therefore, it could be demolished or modified, as the case may be, without any significant adverse impact to the cultural heritage of the Philippines.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered, Petitioner CTM MANAGEMENT CORPORATION respectfully prays that the Honorable Commission issue an ORDER (a) declaring that “Le Parc Apartments”, particularly its landscape, is not an “important cultural property” under Republic Act No. 10066 and (b) indorsing Petitioner’s application for demolition / renovation thereof, as the case may be.

Petitioner prays for any other just and equitable relief.

Makati City for Quezon City, 29 September 2021.

⁷ Annex “3”, Expert Opinion of Architect Paulo G. Alcazaren.

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